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Crucial Deadlines Near for New NATO Missiles

Pershing 2 Due for Deployment in December; Critics Concede That It's Too Late to Turn Back

By ROBERT C. TOTH, *Times Staff Writer*

WASHINGTON—To the Reagan Administration, the future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization rides on deploying two new nuclear-tipped weapons—the Pershing 2 and cruise missile—in West Germany and Britain this December as scheduled, if no arms agreement is reached with the Soviets before then.

At the same time, the Administration recognizes the possibility of violent protests in Western Europe by anti-nuclear demonstrators who fear that the missiles will increase, not lessen, the risk of a nuclear holocaust. Only last month, when Vice President George Bush was touring Europe to defend U.S. arms policies, his car was pelted with rocks and bottles by a small group that broke away from a larger peaceful demonstration in Krefeld, West Germany.

"If the stoning of Bush's car in Krefeld was any sign, we could see blood in the streets before it's over," said one White House official, echoing the concerns of others in the Administration.

The Pershing and cruise missiles that have become the object of such controversy are the culmination of a political-military process that began more than a decade ago. They have become the symbols of the Atlantic Alliance's determination to deploy a counterweight to Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe comparable to the balance already existing between U.S. and Soviet intercontinental weapons.

The political anxiety in Europe that led to the building of these weapons originated in the initial Soviet-American strategic arms limitation agreement signed in 1972. Europeans, particularly West Germans, complained that the United States was bargaining away intercontinental nuclear weapons that had been part of the U.S. protective umbrella over Western Europe, even as the Soviets were building up intermediate-range missiles in Europe.

To placate its European allies, the United States doubled the number of NATO-assigned F-111 bombers to a total of 144. It also nearly doubled the number of Poseidon submarine-launched warheads assigned to NATO to more than 400. But the Europeans were not satisfied, particularly when the Soviets began their massive deployment of

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SS-20 intermediate-range missiles in 1977.

"They (the Europeans) wanted missiles that were visible, on land and not underwater, as reassurance," a U.S. official said. "So they got the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles."

Some senior Pentagon officials have said privately that the Carter Administration made a mistake in agreeing to the 1979 decision by NATO to deploy 108 Pershings and 464 ground-launched cruise missiles. The military value of the weapons is small, they argue, and the political damage to the Atlantic Alliance could be fatal if the deployment fails to go through or if it produces major violence in the streets of West Germany.

But even these critics believe that too much is at stake to turn back now.

Of the two weapons, the Pershing 2 ballistic missile is the main focus of protests because the Soviets say it is the greater threat. Unlike the winged cruise missile, it could reach Soviet territory in minutes rather than hours. The Pershing will also be stationed only in West Germany, which has a pivotal political as well military position in the Western alliance.

"If Pershings don't go into Germany this December," a State Department official said, "even if they are only delayed several months, I doubt the cruise missiles will go into Britain in December (as scheduled), or into Italy (in February or March), or Belgium and the Netherlands later, and so forth. It will all unravel."

For a weapon that has gained such importance, the Pershing 2 actually is a rather modest missile—seven tons, 30-feet long, with a single warhead and a 1,000-mile range. And problems arising during its development have stirred doubts that it would be ready for deployment this year.

It began life in 1974 when the Army let a contract to develop an improved guidance system for the existing Pershing 1A, a missile with a 500-mile range and accuracy of about 1,000 feet. A new maneuverable warhead was devised which, by taking a radar image of the target area as it approaches and comparing it to a map stored in its computer memory, can steer itself to within about 100 feet of its target.

In response to an initial Soviet deployment of 3,000-mile SS-20 missiles in 1977, the Army ordered that a new missile, now called the Pershing 2, be designed with the same dimensions but twice the range of the Pershing 1A. The new guidance system and warhead were incorporated into it. NATO decided in 1979 to deploy the new mobile missile in reloadable launchers in West Germany.

Pershing 2 has had problems achieving the range and accuracy promised. Some of its 15 test flights so far—including its latest one on July 16—have failed. But the Army claims that 12 of the 15 test shots have achieved their "primary test objectives." And the final three developmental test flights will be completed as planned within another month, a Pentagon spokesman said. Total program cost will be more than $1.5 billion.

The missile will be barely ready in quantity, whatever its quality, to meet the December schedule. Sources here said that present plans call for "most of one Pershing 2 battery" of nine missiles—i.e., five or more—to be operational by the end of the year.

This small initial force will be stationed at one of the three Pershing bases in West Germany—Neckarsulm, Schwabisch-Gmund, and Neu-Ulm—with Schwabisch-Gmund considered most likely. Each base is to have its full complement of 36 Pershing 2s by 1987-88, replacing an equal number of Pershing 1As.

There are fewer doubts that the cruise missiles will be ready on time, because the ground-launched weapon is an outgrowth of the sea-launched cruise missile, Tomahawk, whose development has been under way since the early 1970s. Both are torpedo-length cylinders about 21 feet long, which are launched to an altitude of about 1,000 feet on a rocket booster before stubby wings and tail surfaces pop out and a small, highly efficient jet engine ignites. The missiles, like pilotless planes, skim at subsonic speeds just above the ground.

A cruise missile compares radar images of terrain over which it passes to maps stored in its computer memory for guidance along its entire flight path—up to 1,500 miles. At the target, it matches the optical images it sees with stored pictures.

Almost unbelievable claims of accuracy have been made for the system, including the ability to fly between the uprights of football goal posts. At the same time, the weapons have been attacked as insufficiently accurate and easily confused by a common feature of Soviet terrain—heavy snow.

Part of the criticism has been caused by confusion about the various types and warheads for cruise missiles. The 464 destined for Europe will carry nuclear warheads, which allows them greater miss-distances than cruise missiles carrying conventional explosives, such as those for use against ships. And, officials claim, the Europe-bound missiles have no accuracy problems.

Similarly, tests have shown that heavy snow cover and other seasonal variations on the ground do not affect the basic land contour seen by cruise missile radar, according to Robert Holsapple, spokesman for the Pentagon's Joint Cruise Missile Project.

More than 100 tests of sea-launched cruise missiles have been conducted, many of which also met requirements for ground-launched missiles. Since the ground-launched program was commissioned in 1979, only one of its nine test flights have failed, because the engine's air scoop did not open, Holsapple said. The final test flight is planned for later this month to complete the developmental phase of the project, total cost of which will top $3.7 billion.

The Air Force weapon is ready to deploy to Europe on schedule, but just barely. Like the Pershing 2, it will be a token initial deployment—less than a complete unit, or "flight," which consists of 16 missiles—to the U.S. base at Greenham Common in England before the end of the year, U.S. officials said. The weapons and their ground-transporters and launching vehicles will be flown directly to the base airfield in giant C-5 Galaxy jets.

Four cruise missiles, each in a rectangular container, are carried in a truck transporter. The transporters and associated launching vehicles are housed in partly underground, hardened garages, from which they will be driven—"flushed"—in time of crisis to launch the weapons from dispersed sites. (Ninety-six cruise missiles eventually will be based at Greenham Common, with another 64 at Molesworth, also in England.)

Italy will get the second cruise missile flight to be sent to Europe, but the site preparations at Comiso, in Sicily, have proceeded more slowly than in England. The first missiles will begin arriving at Comiso in February or March, U.S. officials said. Eventually 112 cruise missiles will be based there.

Belgium is scheduled to get 48 cruises starting next year, Holland an equal number in 1985 and West Germany the final 96 sometime later. All deployment is scheduled to be completed by 1989.

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ARMS CONTROL

NUMERICAL INSECURITY

Robert C. Johansen

Parity in numbers of intermediate-range weapons in Europe, which both sides insist on, is incompatible with parity in strategic weapons worldwide

A MAJOR CRISIS IS approaching for U.S.–Soviet relations, for the cohesiveness of NATO, and for the social fabric of the European countries that are committed to deploying new U.S. intermediate-range nuclear weapons. The U.S. and Soviet governments have taken positions that place them on a collision course in arms deployment. Some time this December, the U.S. intends to begin deploying weapons in Europe that will almost certainly prompt the Soviet Union to respond with additional weapons of its own—in Europe and perhaps in this hemisphere. Each side will protest the destabilizing nature of the other's new weapons. Each side will ignore its own responsibility for increasing the threat to the other. It will be difficult to back away from announced intentions to proceed with deployments, because of fear that compromise may appear to be a lack of national resolve. Europe will become pervasively nuclearized. Every additional weapon deployed there by both sides will be an added target for destruction—and the deployments will make us less secure than we have been at any other time since the Cuban missile crisis. If the United States insists on its way in Europe and simultaneously makes threats against Soviet deployments near U.S. borders, it is not at all certain that the Soviet Union will back down as it did in 1962.

These dangers can be avoided if the United States seeks to salvage an agreement from the stalemated talks on intermediate-range nuclear forces. And such an agreement should be possible, because the costs that either side might incur in accepting the most favorable proposal of the other are far less than the costs of allowing planned deployments to proceed.

Each side has already offered terms that the other could reasonably have accepted as part of a mutual, overall halt to the nuclear-arms buildup in Europe. By rejecting out of hand the terms they have been offered, both Moscow and Washington have turned down good security bargains. Their inaction suggests that officials in both capitals seek not so much to increase the present and future security of their citizens as to use arms-control negotiations to maintain or achieve a military advantage.

THE KREMLIN AND the White House have over the past two years rejected four proposals, each of which could have enhanced the security of the Unit-

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Robert C. Johansen is senior fellow at the World Policy Institute, in New York, and a visiting fellow at the Center of International Studies at Princeton University.

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ed States, Europe, and the Soviet Union. First, in February of 1981, Leonid Brezhnev offered to freeze the future deployment of SS-20s, the Soviets' most modern intermediate-range missiles, if the United States reversed its plans to put in Europe 572 Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles, its intermediate-range weapons. At that time, the Soviet Union had deployed fewer than 180 SS-20s. Nonetheless, the Reagan Administration immediately rejected the Soviet offer. It refused to tolerate any Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe, because the U.S. had no precise equivalent—even though in aircraft and in both shorter- and longer-range nuclear forces, the U.S. actually held an advantage over Soviet forces.

The U.S. decision to reject Brezhnev's offer was not based on legitimate concerns for the military security of Europe. A difference of several hundred medium-range missiles amid the thousands of nuclear weapons deployed by both sides is irrelevant to the maintenance of an effective nuclear deterrent. U.S. officials might well have stopped the arms race in Europe by allowing the Soviet Union an inconsequential edge in a single category of weapons. Instead, the U.S. and other NATO governments pushed ahead with plans for modernizing European nuclear forces. In the absence of any agreement, the Soviet Union continued to deploy SS-20s at the rate of roughly fifty to sixty per year—which NATO seized upon to rationalize planned Western deployments.

In November of 1981, a second set of proposals was offered. President Reagan, with an eye to the growing peace movement in Europe and at home, dramatically announced U.S. willingness to cancel the planned deployment of the 572 missiles to which the Soviet leaders and many Europeans objected if in return the Soviet leadership would agree to dismantle all existing Soviet intermediate-range missiles—approximately 600 SS-4s, SS-5s, and SS-20s. In this "zero-zero option," the Soviet Union was asked to swap the removal of missiles it already had in place for a promise from the U.S. not to deploy missiles then on the drawing board. This would have been a painful step for Kremlin officials to take. But in accepting the zero-zero option, Soviet leaders probably could have negotiated a halt to the arms race in Europe.

Soviet leaders rejected the U.S. plan, because it did not include the removal of U.S. nuclear arms already deployed in Europe—bombers, tactical nuclear weapons like the 108 Pershing I missiles, and offshore nuclear weapons capable of striking Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Moscow countered with its own zero-zero option, calling for reductions of all U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, and in British and French nuclear forces as well, in return for dismantling all SS-4s, SS-5s, and SS-20s. But this proposal was not perceived as serious—it seemed to have been made to counter Reagan's propaganda victory—and was dismissed by U.S. officials as rhetorical.

Last December, more than a year after the President announced his zero-zero option, a third major proposal was issued, this one by Yuri V. Andropov, the new general secretary of the Communist Party. He offered to limit Soviet intermediate-range European missiles to the equivalent of the combined nuclear missiles of the United Kingdom and France, or 162—the total number of Western intermediate-range missiles currently in place in Europe. Once again, Washington rebuffed the Soviet offer, because, among other reasons, it would have banned U.S. intermediate-range missiles in Europe. (To make this proposal even more attractive, Andropov offered last May to reduce Soviet intermediate-range *warheads*, not merely missiles, to the level of British and French forces. This offer would have reduced the number of SS-20s deployed in Europe to fewer than 100.)

Undeniably, aspects of the Soviet offer were unclear. Whether the existing Soviet SS-20s in excess of 162 would have been dismantled or merely withdrawn was not specified; that issue apparently would have been negotiable. But establishing a firm ceiling on Soviet missiles and having the "excess" SS-20s removed from Europe would have helped curtail the arms buildup in Europe—at a minimal security risk to NATO. Any effort to return the SS-20s to Europe could have been readily observed and counterbalanced with existing Western weapons. In addition, if a European arms agreement had been reached last December, further reductions of SS-20s, including any deployed in Asia, would have been far easier to negotiate than in the absence of an initial accord.

In the fourth proposal, the Reagan Administration, undoubtedly prompted by political pressures in this country and in Europe, relaxed its rigid zero-zero option by proposing that an unspecified number of U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles, perhaps 100 to 200, be deployed to match a reduced level of Soviet intermediate-range forces. The U.S. proposal did not take into account British and French nuclear forces. The Soviet Union immediately declined this offer, repeating its objection that the addition of any new kinds of U.S. missiles to NATO forces would upset the existing nuclear balance in Europe.

THE EMPHASIS BOTH sides place on numerical equivalency is as unnecessary as it is misleading. All that is required to maintain an effective deterrent, according to deterrence theory itself, is that either side, after suffering an attack, be able to inflict destruction on the other sufficient that the anticipated benefits of war to a potential aggressor will never outweigh the disadvantages. By drawing on existing conventional, tactical-nuclear, and strategic-nuclear arsenals, NATO can inflict such damage without any additional deployments. As a 1982 study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute concluded, "All the targets that can be struck by new Soviet and U.S. theatre systems can be, or are, targeted by central [strategic] systems as well." Given such capabilities, small numerical advantages, for either the Soviet Union or the United States, do not matter.

Rather than asking whether a proposal would allow a weapon-for-weapon equivalency, U.S. officials, in determining how to respond to Soviet arms-control offers, should weigh more heavily the following four criteria:

(1) Will acceptance of the proposal curb the arms race and make possible the maintenance of European security at lower, rather than higher, levels of armament?

(2) Will acceptance of the proposal increase the prospects for an eventual denuclearization of European security forces? Alternatively, will rejection, for all practical purposes, make denuclearization impossible?

(3) Will acceptance of the proposal slow the arms race in other categories of weapons? For example, will it encourage an effective START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) agreement?

(4) Finally, will acceptance of the proposal help decrease the likelihood of war, by reducing tensions and by halting the development and deployment of destabilizing weapons?

If these standards are used, it becomes clear that the United States and the Soviet Union have needlessly missed opportunities to de-escalate their arms competition and to enhance the security

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overturn the 1962 understanding that excluded Soviet nuclear missiles from Cuba. Whether Soviet leaders have in mind sea-based cruise missiles--much harder to verify than the strategic missiles now deployed on Soviet submarines—remains to be seen.

The Soviet Union certainly does not need new missiles in the Western Hemisphere, whether on land or on sea, any more than the U.S. needs them in Europe. But Soviet leaders chafe against being treated unequally. In forcing the Soviet Union to back down in the confrontation over Soviet missiles in Cuba in 1962, the United States moved Soviet officials to commit themselves to an enormous expansion of their missile force and to vow that such a diplomatic reversal would never happen again. President Kennedy admitted that he raised the odds of war as high as fifty–fifty. It would be folly to take similar risks now. Yet the current U.S. administration is more reckless in taking such risks than any other administration of the past three decades.

If restraint in the arms race is ever to be achieved, the United States and the Soviet Union must honor reciprocity in their relations with one another.

To deny reciprocity in U.S.–Soviet relations is tantamount to denying any chance for meaningful arms-control agreements. Such a denial also disrupts the delicate psychological side of deterrence and encourages a competitive, almost compulsive, deployment of weapons that makes deterrence less stable.

We perceive the logic of reciprocity clearly when observing the behavior of others: if Soviet leaders deploy certain arms and deny the United States a reciprocal right, President Reagan uses this as evidence of dangerous, warlike, evil behavior. Yet we fail to see our own complicity in heightening the militarization of international relations. As a result, U.S. behavior, legitimized by our own misperception, increases our insecurity. U.S. policies for European deployments actually *invite* new Soviet missiles in Europe and in this hemisphere.

Current U.S.–Soviet bickering over intermediate-range missiles in Europe is pointless and dangerous. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union will benefit by waiting any longer for the other side to agree to its definition of equality in European nuclear forces. The United States and the Soviet Union stand only 162 missiles away from an agreement that could halt the nuclear-arms buildup in Europe. The warheads on the 162 SS-20s now deployed in Europe amount to 3 percent of the U.S. warheads currently deployed. Yet for that 3 percent, we risk increasing the likelihood of a general nuclear war.

Why does the possibility of achieving an agreement remain so remote when an objective analysis of security costs and benefits suggests that an agreement is well within reach? The answer lies in the priorities of the U.S. and Soviet governments. Officials seek less to halt the arms buildup than to demonstrate and increase their political powers. They seem unwilling to take as many risks in planning for peace as they are prepared to take in planning for war.

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Arms and the Art of Compromise

The arms issue now stands before Ronald Reagan and Yuri Andropov. Extraordinary statesmanship is required from both.

John Steinbruner

IN THE THIRD YEAR of an American presidency close observers begin to anticipate the judgment of history. Initial political impulses have had time to encounter the realities of governing. The outlines of accomplishment or failure become visible.

It is a personal as well as an historical drama. Few persons are ever tested as thoroughly as presidents are. The power and responsibilities of the office inexorably probe the entire character of its incumbent. Great strengths and human failings both document their presence in an enduring record of events. The third year of office is thus an occasion for sympathy and fascination, but also for stern demands on behalf of the great interests that are at stake in a president's performance, interests that will long outlive his time.

For Ronald Reagan the third year brings a particularly severe test. Events have conspired to confront him with the issues of nuclear arms control—not an arena he would have naturally chosen. Cycles of military development measured in decades and a chronic festering of U.S.-Soviet relations have focused large questions of security policy on specific actions that will be taken in the course of 1983 unless established schedules are deliberately altered: the deployment of nuclear-armed cruise missiles and Pershing II ballistic missiles on land bases in Western Europe and the deployment of cruise missiles with nuclear warheads on American attack submarines.

Though sincerely justified within the United States as responses to the existing Soviet threat, each of these actions represents to the Soviet Union a new departure in nuclear weapons capability, and is likely to trigger corresponding Soviet weapons deployments. As a practical matter, over the course of 10 to 15 years unconstrained competition in these weapons would almost certainly work to the strong disadvantage of the United States even though we currently lead in mastery of the basic technology. Moreover, given the context of events in which they occur, these actions could readily destroy the entire framework of strategic arms control as it has developed to date. If that happens, the prevailing conditions of international security will be dramatically altered, probably for ill though conceivably for good, depending on how the ensuing diplomacy is handled.

We have encountered such moments at least twice before in the nuclear age: in the late 1950s, when ballistic missiles with thermonuclear warheads had been demonstrated to be technically feasible but the scale of their deployment had not yet been decided, and again in the mid-1960s, when the question of fitting ballistic missiles with multiple warheads first arose. In both cases the allure of technical opportunity and the hostile dynamics of U.S.-Soviet relations easily overrode any consideration of mutual restraint, and the question of preventing these deployments through arms control was never seriously pursued. In retrospect, those were grave errors of judgment, for extensive deployments of ballistic missiles with multiple warheads have clearly degraded the relative security position of the United States. It may not have been possible to restrain those weapons, but it was surely a major mistake that no significant effort was made. In 1983, arms control is now a part of security policy, but its efforts are focused more on revising the past than on shaping the impending future. Again we appear blind to predictable consequences.

As its president is tested so is the United States political system as a whole. Our form of government, brilliantly and effectively designed to prevent tyranny and to promote competition between conflicting interests and opinions, has difficulty establishing the coherence and consistency of policy that the management of nuclear weapons inherently requires. The issues of nuclear security have hardly been neglected in our professional literature or in recent public discussion, but nonetheless the unusual importance and long-term significance of these immediately scheduled deployments have not entered the nation's consciousness with the clarity that wise collective judgment would seem to require. Weapons issues that are not as immediately important—the fate of the MX missile and the prospects for strategic missile defense, for example—are more prominently debated. Deeply cherished principles—such as equality in weapons inventories—are being advanced in absolutist terms with little regard for their practical effects. Legitimate outrage at various aspects of Soviet policy is being carried to the point that the core security interests of a formidable opponent are obscured. These are ingredients for tragedy.

Can we, with our large, boisterous, rather disorderly democracy, penetrate a confusion of rhetoric, emotion, and narrow purpose to perceive our larger, enduring interests? Can we foresee security consequences that unfold over a decade or more? Can we organize more than a capacity for destruction in service of our ultimate security? Are we capable of serious statesmanship in dealing with an opponent that many of us hate, most of us fear, and none of us trusts?

These are uncomfortably open questions. Our safety in this world depends upon them more than we have yet acknowledged to ourselves.

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John Steinbruner is director of the Brookings Foreign Policy Studies program.

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much sense.

At that point, in response to rapidly developing public alarm, the president personally intervened twice in the evolution of his administration's position, in November 1981 to bring about direct negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe and in March 1982 to reestablish a separate negotiation on intercontinental-range nuclear forces. In both cases he advanced arms control proposals that revealed an implicit strategy quite different in character from what one would have expected from the public discussion —at least the appearance of a deeper game.

His proposals called for significant quantitative reductions restricted to those categories where the Soviet Union has enjoyed a numerical advantage. In Europe the Soviet deployment of SS-4, SS-5, and SS-20 ballistic missiles (approximately 550 launchers and 1,300 warheads in total) would be completely eliminated in exchange for abandoning the NATO plan to deploy 108 Pershing II ballistic missiles and 464 cruise missiles (572 total launchers, each with a single warhead). Globally the principal Soviet ICBMs would be reduced: the SS-18 by 198 launchers and 1,980 warheads and the SS-19 by 230 launchers and 1,380 warheads in exchange for reductions of 425 launchers and 872 warheads in the U.S. Minuteman force.*

These are the reductions in the maximum-allowed Soviet deployment that would result from proposed sublimits on SS-18 (at 110 launchers) and SS-19 (100 launchers) according to published reports of the U.S. proposal. Actual reductions would probably be less since Soviet forces probably have less than the maximum allowed number. If accepted, these reductions would completely eliminate the historical Soviet advantage in intermediate-range ballistic missiles—to the principal benefit of Britain, France, and China, whose forces would remain unrestricted. They would also reduce the Soviet advantage in weapons for prompt hard-target attack by 87 percent. In the more likely event that the proposals were rejected by the Soviets for these reasons, they would project the principle of equity and a desire for restraint in a manner that would appeal to international public opinion.

Meanwhile the real message to the Soviets—or at least the one they are likely to perceive—lay in what was *not* proposed; that is, any substantial qualitative restriction on strategic weapons development. Tacitly, the material pressure on the Soviet Union emerging from the Reagan administration is qualitative in character. The apparent intention is to develop a more sophisticated, more diverse U.S. strategic arsenal rather than a larger one and thereby to force major adjustments in the large Soviet deployments. The implied purpose is to force the Soviets to waste the heavy investment they so recently completed by making it technically obsolete. (The most compelling threat from the Soviet perspective is the Trident II ballistic missile, expected to give the U.S. submarine force the capability to attack hardened Soviet ICBM silos.) Therein lies the whip that gives serious substance to the rhetoric of confrontation.

An Implied but Credible Threat

From the perspective of the Soviet Union, as best as can be judged from the United States, the implied threat in the Reagan administration's security policy is quite credible and potentially very disruptive to what seems to be their own unfolding policy. It is credible because it fits with their own historical experience, their assessment of American strength, and their natural perception of Reagan as an extremist figure in the American political system. It is disruptive because if pursued it will force a Soviet reaction against the dictates of a strong commitment to internal economic reform.

For 30 years the Soviets have pursued a competition in the development of strategic nuclear weapons using an economy half the size of ours and a technical base in that economy that is far less developed. Under stable political leadership since 1965, they have utilized a relatively more decisive planning process to overcome the gross disparities in strategic weapons capability that existed in the early 1960s. In quantitative terms they have matched the U.S. weapons inventories and, indeed, established numerical advantages in several categories—the number of strategic weapons launchers, for example, and the overall explosive power of the weapons they carry. Despite that effort the Soviets are still behind in the most significant measure, the number of weapons that can be delivered to separate targets (approximately 9,200 for the United States to 8,200 for the USSR). At current rates of development the Soviets are projected to remain behind the United States in the number of weapons that can be delivered after absorbing an initial attack.

In land-based ICBMs, the Soviets have reasonably matched the United States in the critical qualitative elements of guidance system accuracy and explosive yield for a given warhead design weight. They had to come from behind to do so. With the larger booster rockets they have deployed, their overall ICBM force has a larger number of separate warheads of equal quality than does the comparable U.S. force: a potential of 6,270 total for the Soviet Union to 2,143 for the United States; and in the special category of highly accurate warheads for hard-target attack, potentially 5,060 for the Soviet Union and 1,650 for the United

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* The American proposal would reduce U.S. and USSR strategic forces to 850 ballistic missile launchers with 5,000 warheads total. No more than half of the warheads could be on land-based ICBMs. In addition, the Soviet SS-18 and SS-19 would be limited to 210 launchers total. Excluding modernization programs such as the MX and any Soviet equivalent, that set of provisions would allow 1,700 hard-target warheads in the Soviet force as compared with 1,275 on 425 residual Minuteman III missiles. This would reduce the Soviet numerical advantage in this category from 3,410 to 425—a reduction of 87 percent. Ultimately the intended modernization of the U.S. program would substitute MX missiles in the land-based force and Trident II missile in the submarine force, and that would make all 5,000 allowed warheads capable of hard-target attack. The Soviets could do no better than equal that number.

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The Soviet leadership has been quite explicit in saying that they would react in kind to the deployment of U.S. medium-range missiles in Europe and they have defined two reasonably specific deadlines. When the "practical preparations" toward the NATO deployment are taken, Leonid Brezhnev stated in a March 1982 speech, the moratorium on SS-20 deployments he announced will no longer "be in force." When the NATO deployment is actually in place, Brezhnev indicated, the Soviet Union would feel "compelled" to take "retaliatory steps that would put...the United States itself, its own territory, in an analogous position." (Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko repeated the warning in a June 1982 press conference at the UN.)

The meaning of the phrase "practical preparations" is not entirely clear, but equipment relating directly to U.S. missiles is scheduled to appear at bases in Europe early this summer. That appears quite likely to trigger the sequence of reaction to which the Soviets have publicly and officially committed themselves. If they do not react, the Soviets will run the risk of being exposed in a bluff with the underlying issues unresolved.

Though Soviet spokesmen have yet to draw an explicit connection in any public statement, recent weapons tests have offered concrete indication that they do not intend to bluff. Last February the Soviets tested a new, light, solid-fuel ICBM represented as a replacement for the SS-13. This missile, apparently capable of mobile deployment, could be used at reduced range to cover targets in Europe as well as at full range for targets in the United States—a pattern displayed in the late 1960s with the SS-11 missile. In addition, tests of a new Soviet cruise missile were announced in early April. Both types of tests confirm available capability to react with material weapons deployments, and at least in broad outline one can infer the logic available to Soviet planners in considering their options. There appear to be four principle options: cruise missiles, land mobile ICBMs, anti-satellite systems, and pre-emptive attack.

1) *Cruise Missiles*: Though the Soviets have long utilized cruise missiles in their naval forces, the combination of size, guidance-system accuracy, range, warhead yield, and ease of operation of their weapons made them distinctly primitive and relatively insignificant compared with the cruise missiles now scheduled for deployment in the American forces. The Soviets have been pursuing programs to match American cruise missile technology, however, and it is prudent to assume that over the course of the 1980s they will achieve some approximation of current American weapons even if they do not keep pace with their technical elaboration. That achievement would be sufficient to enable the Soviets to exploit some fundamental nontechnical advantages in any extended competition in these deployments.

The United States and most of its major allies have a high concentration of targets near coastal areas, and are easily approached through the open ocean or through seas controlled by the Soviet navy. By contrast the Soviet Union is a landlocked country with strong naval defenses in its few seas approaches. Moreover, though a less enduring advantage, the Soviet Union historically has developed a much more extensive air defense system. The current capacity of that system for resisting cruise missile intrusion is probably extremely weak, but it does provide an extensive base from which to develop, at least in institutional terms. The United States has historically neglected air defense development, and though there is some capability in Europe, the shallow depth of territory and proximity to the Soviet Union sharply limit the potential there.

For these reasons an extended competition in cruise missile deployments is likely to work to the relative advantage of the Soviets even if they are not as adroit in the basic technology. Cruise missiles in mobile deployments on land provide an available means of increasing weapons deployments against Western Europe in retaliation for the NATO deployment. Moreover, though it is probably not their preferred solution, submarine-based cruise missiles do offer one means of seeking a low-warning attack capability against the United States to support their diplomatic commitment to place us in an analogous position.

2) *Land mobile ICBMs*: The small solid-fuel ICBM recently tested in the Soviet Union provides another logical means of responding effectively to U.S. pressure even at a net technical disadvantage. With large land areas that are not densely inhabited, reliable control over the Soviet population, and an ability to restrict unauthorized access to any given segment of territory, the Soviet Union is in a better position to sustain the complex logistics of an invulnerable mobile missile deployment on land. In densely populated Western Europe it is essentially impossible to move missiles continuously or to keep their positions unknown for very long. In the United States it is more conceivable in principle but very difficult in practice because of strong domestic sensitivities both to restrictions on land use and to routine transit of nuclear weapons through populated areas. Thus Soviet planners can contemplate an extensive deployment of small mobile ICBMs that would both reduce the vulnerability of their ICBM force and allow them to integrate theater- and intercontinental-range operations by using the same missile for both purposes.

3) *Anti-satellite systems*: The Soviet military planners can also effectively respond by further development of their current limited capacity to attack space satellites. The United States is involved in alliance relationships throughout the world and conducts major portions of its military operations far from the territory of the United States itself. In managing these operations the United States has already become highly dependent on communication and other military support assets based in space and will become more so over the next decade as more sophisticated (and expensive) equipment is deployed. The Soviet Union also uses space extensively, but as a continental power with inherently shorter lines of communication is less dependent upon space. Since attack on assets in space does not require either great expense or technical virtuosity, this is an area of military development the Soviets could readily use to negate the effects of American sophistication and to retaliate for the pressures placed on their own

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visible for some time to those familiar with the underlying interests of the two sides. It would involve a partial and temporary agreement designed at least to postpone the two events likely to trigger irreversible reactions: the introduction of the nuclear-armed cruise missile by the United States and the small mobile ICBM by the Soviet Union. Moreover, in order to break the current cycle of interaction NATO would indefinitely postpone Pershing II deployment, and in exchange the Soviet Union would reduce its intermediate-range systems to some residual number approximating 100 launchers. The Soviet Union would have to concede NATO's right to match that number, but pending resolution of major issues that would remain outstanding (tactical aircraft in Europe and the British and French missiles forces, for example) NATO would hold its implementation of that right at some point short of complete deployment. The fundamental purpose of the compromise is to buy time for resolving those issues for which the basis for plausible agreement has not yet been prepared.

Seized with the inevitable ritual of negotiations, both governments at the moment have numerous objections to the provisions of a partial compromise. Neither can entirely hide the fact, however, that this interim result would be a great deal better for both than the outcome likely to emerge from the impending breakdown of restraint.

Without agreement the United States will have to proceed with the NATO deployment in the face of a Soviet reaction likely to intensify political division within Europe. Deployment under these circumstances will drive defense ministries loyal to the NATO commitment against sharp domestic political opposition on behalf of weapons whose military rationale is exceedingly questionable. Missiles located on land bases in Western Europe and the command system necessary to operate those missiles are highly vulnerable to pre-emptive attack, certainly by Soviet nuclear forces and even by Soviet tactical aircraft using conventional munitions. This vulnerability combined with the inherently cumbersome decision procedures in an alliance of 15 democratic governments renders these weapons essentially unable to execute military missions since an attempt to use them would almost certainly trigger effective pre-emption. When this condition is realized, as it is destined to be in the course of contentious public debate, the prime rational for these weapons as a symbol of American commitment to Europe will be severely damaged. One cannot responsibly couple U.S. central strategic forces to Europe by means of weapons that cannot meet the standards of protection required for stable deterrence. The harsh fact is that the NATO deployment cannot withstand the pressures that will descend upon it in the absence of an arms control agreement.

The U.S. deployment of nuclear-armed cruise missiles in attack submarines does not have a problem of vulnerability but nonetheless it is not an area in which the United States ought to stimulate sustained competition. The deployment adds very little to American offensive attack capability against land targets. It interferes with the more important tactical missions of attack submarines. Over the long term large deployments work to the advantage of the Soviet Union because of geographic conditions. In the end the concessions involved in compromise are quite consistent with fundamental interests of the United States and the NATO allies.

Fundamental Soviet interests are easily accommodated as well. Current Soviet strategic forces have more than ample offensive firepower against Western Europe as implied by their willingness to contemplate sharp reductions in their intermediate-range systems. Without the special threat of Pershing II and an open-ended competition in submarine cruise missiles, the Soviets could tolerate a residual deployment of ground-based cruise missiles by NATO if they were held short of high-alert status. That latter condition would mitigate the pressures for pre-emption Soviet commanders might otherwise feel. Whatever net benefits might accrue to the Soviet Union from political divisiveness within NATO cannot outrank their larger interests. The Soviet Union simply cannot afford the enterprise of dominating Western Europe by force; stable political accommodation is by far the more practical course for Soviet policy.

The time has effectively expired for a compromise along these lines to emerge from formal negotiations and routine diplomatic proceeding. The American INF (intermediate-range nuclear forces) negotiator started down this track in July 1982 with some degree of informal cooperation from his Soviet counterpart. From available public accounts it appears that his efforts were aborted by bureaucratic warfare in Washington and that Moscow, apprised of that fact, responded in kind. Thereafter both governments have engaged in public posturing designed more to argue the equity of their conflicting positions than to move toward a compromise outcome. As the Soviet foreign minister noted on April 3, the process is diverging and, as the observing world should note, the deadlines for virtually irreversible action are upon us all. Normal diplomacy has failed.

The issue therefore stands unavoidably before President Reagan and Soviet Party Chairman Yuri Andropov. Unless they both undertake extraordinary acts of statesmanship, unless they are able and willing to lead their governments into accommodation rather than simply responding to pressures accumulated beneath them, a mutually damaging confrontation with extended consequences will be the record that history attaches to them.

In the United States we know little about the Soviet leader and can only hope. We know rather more about our own leader and can at least exhort.

For Ronald Reagan, we can appreciate, it is indeed a severe test of character. His entire career has been that of an unusually skilled, highly partisan domestic politician. He has championed strong principles that represent a segment of the country and has risen to power on their intense support. To put it mildly, those principles and his supporters offer little basis for realistic accommodation with the Soviet Union. In

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FEATURES/COLUMNISTS

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A PRACTICAL WAY TO ARMS CONTROL

By Leslie H. Gelb

ARMS CONTROL IS NEITHER SIN NOR salvation. It is a way — along with diplomacy and military decisions — of managing Soviet-American competition. Without such negotiated mutual restraint, the competition would be far less controllable and both sides could acquire capabilities that just might make nuclear war more thinkable. It is not a way of solving our security problem. It is a way of preserving the Soviet-American "peace" that, with great good luck, has survived the last 40 years of tension and waste. To ask much more of a bargaining process between two powerful countries so mistrustful of each other is to condemn it to failure.

Our inability to appreciate arms control as a practical matter has contributed to flip-flops in American attitudes toward negotiating reductions in the superpowers' nuclear arsenals. And it has added to the clamor for arms control that has blown up into a political crisis for the Reagan Administration, a divisive problem for the Western alliance and a painful moral issue for many Americans.

On June 18, 1979, amid the archaic splendors of Vienna, President Carter signed a strategic arms limitation treaty with the Soviet Union, the second such accord between the superpowers, a compact it had taken seven years and three Administrations to negotiate. Back in Washington, there were few cheers. The Russians had been making political inroads in Angola and the Horn of Africa, their military buildup had made them our equals in nuclear weaponry, and public opinion in the United States had been swayed by the right-wing view of arms control as something that would hold us back while the Soviet Union exploited its momentum. The treaty — SALT II — was never to be ratified. Subsequently, to the Reagan Administration, arms control became almost synonymous with sin.

This Wednesday, in the businesslike setting of Geneva, Soviet and American delegations will resume negotiations on strategic arms that have been stalled for four years. And in Washington and around the country, political leaders, foreign-policy experts and wide sections of the public are extolling the virtues of arms control and demanding movement toward sweeping accords.

Leslie H. Gelb is The Times's national-security correspondent.

Congress makes its funding of President Reagan's defense programs dependent on his conduct of the nuclear talks. During the SALT II debate, legislators would not accept arms control without more arms; now they will not agree to more arms — such as the new, extra-powerful MX missile that was recently approved — without arms control. The country's Roman Catholic bishops, in an extraordinary pastoral letter, make nuclear deterrence — our traditional safeguard against the danger of Soviet attack — morally acceptable only as a stopgap during an active search for broad disarmament and political agreements. The governments of Western Europe make their acceptance of American medium-range missiles on their soil dependent on good-faith efforts in the current Soviet-American talks in that area. Arms control, so denigrated such a short time ago, has suddenly been transformed into a symbol of salvation.

There has been no change in Soviet behavior in the last four years to account for this reversal of attitudes; if anything, Moscow's readiness to use its muscle has been made even plainer in Afghanistan and in Poland. There has been no change in the comparative power of the Soviet and American nuclear arsenals; the Reagan Administration has increased the strategic budget, but the deployments are yet to come. The change has been in the public mood. Frightened by the nuclear buildup and by Administration rhetoric about fighting and winning nuclear wars, and played upon by Soviet propaganda, public opinion has swung back to support of arms talks. The reversal has had its effect on elected officials. Arms control has become good politics again.

In fact, the prospect of an open-ended arms race, with attendant divisions in Western societies — witness the nuclear-freeze movements on both sides of the Atlantic and the mass upsurge in Western Europe against the planned installation of American Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in that theater — has set off a kind of pro-arms-control panic. Yet plunging ahead toward ambitious new goals, without considering the reasons that brought the whole process to such a grinding halt four years ago, will be to risk a repetition of failure. If we want to do better in this new phase of arms control than we did in the past, we should, it seems to me, adopt a new negotiating strategy.

Most of the reasons for the comparatively lean accomplishments of 20 years of arms negotiations are built into the structure of Soviet-American competition. Because of the lack of trust, neither side is about to make large con-

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Of the treaties completed after 1972, only SALT II was of comparable importance, and none were ratified by the Senate.

Thus, a number of agreements reached when the middle ground was still dominant in American politics headed off competition in certain areas. A treaty concluded in 1963 banned nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, bringing about immediate and tangible benefits in safeguarding people from fallout and radiation. A 1967 agreement banned the use of outer space for any military purposes whatever. Treaties in 1959 and 1971 internationalized and demilitarized the Antarctic region and prohibited the placing of nuclear weapons on the ocean floor. A 1972 convention barred the development, production and stockpiling of biological weapons, though some questions of Soviet violations arose several years ago.

In the same period, the superpowers reached two agreements on avoiding war by miscalculation — a 1963 accord setting up a "hot line" between Washington and Moscow, and a 1971 compact requiring each side to notify the other of missile tests beyond its national territory. In 1972, SALT I froze intercontinental-range missile launchers at existing levels. A companion treaty imposed a virtual ban on anti-ballistic missile defenses (ABM's) — thus, in theory, lifting from each side the fear that the other might launch a first strike in the belief that it could defend itself against a counterblow. The acceptance of mutual vulnerability solemnized the doctrine of mutual deterrence, on which our security was seen to rest.

That was the high point of progress. Then the process soured. Liberals lauded the ABM agreement but faulted SALT I for not stopping the development of multiple independently targetable warheads (MIRV's). The New Right joined with more traditional conservatives in attacking the treaty for doing nothing to curb what they saw as Russia's growing capacity to destroy American missiles in their silos. And they were clearly uncomfortable with the commitment to no defense — a reservation that surfaced conspicuously in Mr. Reagan's recent "Star Wars" speech visualizing an eventual space-based shield against nuclear attack.

Since then, efforts to expand the partial test ban have languished. A 1974 treaty limiting underground explosions to the equivalent of 150,000 tons of TNT remains unratified. More than six years of talks to outlaw nuclear explosions altogether have been getting nowhere. Talks on placing limits on antisatellite systems, chemical weapons and the like drag on.

The SALT II treaty of 1979 placed only marginal restrictions on current nuclear forces and programs. And by that time, political opposition to arms control was sharply on the rise. Conservatives noted that, while the treaty would reduce the number of Soviet missiles and bombers by about 500 and — for the first time — would limit the remaining missile force to a specific number of warheads, it would still permit the Soviet Union to continue MIRV-ing up to the agreed warhead total. They argued that the treaty did nothing about Russia's superheavy land-based missiles while barring the United States from building similar weapons (though the American military had no desire whatsoever to do so). They took exception to the fact that the treaty prevented the United States from deployment schemes to solve the problem of missile vulnerability (the problem that Mr. Reagan's special commission has now banished into the political limbo.)

Whatever the merits of the charges that blocked the treaty's ratification until Afghanistan made Mr. Carter withdraw it from Senate consideration, the controversy was symptomatic of a cresting reaction against constraining arms compacts with an increasingly dangerous adversary. It was increasingly difficult to gain political support for agreements, let alone negotiate them. The case against arms control had reached its apogee in American politics. Before considering where we go from here, this case should be examined in more detail.

THE LIBERALS HAD TWO OBjections: the treaties we had signed had been used to justify new arms commitments, and they had not resulted in any savings in military spending. In fact, many liberals had come to see arms control as a sham, a device to codify the arms race.

Undeniably, the need for Congressional backing for negotiating initiatives gave pro-armament groups considerable leverage on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, bargaining with Moscow put a premium on developing new weapons that could be used as "bargaining chips" — chips that seemed always to end up being deployed rather than cashed in. And Administrations did ask for more arms after each treaty signing.

But it is far from clear that these weapons would not have been deployed anyway. Technology marches on, and Moscow did not show much greater inclination than Washington to call the march to a halt. As for savings, there weren't any. But it is often forgotten that strategic forces account for only about 15 percent of the Pentagon budget, and opportunities for savings are limited.

In the end, whatever their objections, liberals went along with the treaties as the lesser evil. Conservatives, however, dug in their heels. Their main arguments may be stated, and answered, as follows:

1. The Russians cheat on arms control pacts and gain important advantages.

A panel of conservative and liberal experts who studied the field of strategic-arms and test-ban treaties under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace concluded in its report last April that the record "does not support this claim." Nor has any Administration, including the present one, ever formally charged Moscow with violations.

Mr. Reagan, as we have noted, did raise some questions recently about Soviet compliance with a SALT II provision and with the 1974 limitation on underground tests, but was persuaded to leave these issues to the Soviet-American Security Consultative Commission, established to consider complaints by either side. The record over an 11-year period shows that the Russians have on occasion taken advantage of ambiguities in the treaty text, and have acted in disregard of unilateral American interpretations of the text that they never accepted. Yet every question brought before the commission by the United States has been satisfactorily resolved. Moscow either accepted the American complaint and altered its behavior or showed sufficient grounds for its own position. Soviet complaints against American actions have also been satisfactorily resolved.

Even those who have charged Moscow with consistent cheating have rarely maintained that Soviet violations could not be caught. Virtually every top American official

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ARMS CONTROL...Cont'd

Reagan Administration would still intend to go ahead with the MX. Meanwhile, both sides are developing a whole new generation of weapons capable of hitting military targets with far greater accuracy. With each step, both sides draw closer to the Faustian illusion of being able to fight, limit, control and — yes — perhaps even prevail in a nuclear war.

There must be a better way. And it can only be in the direction of more modest treaties, which do not take so long to complete that they become vulnerable to political shifts at home — of small steps, taken one at a time, with an agreed common purpose.

The process would have to begin with agreement on long-term objectives. The key ones would be these: restrictions on each side's ability to launch surprise attacks; an equal capability to maintain a survivable deterrent against any such attack; a phasing out of nuclear weapons that present attractive targets to the adversary; gradual reductions in the number of intercontinental and medium-range nuclear warheads and bombs; widening cooperation, including on-site inspection, to verify compliance. In effect, each stage, which would last for two or three years, would be aimed not at obtaining all possible advantage for your side but at assuring the other side the same degree of security you seek for yourself.

The first stage would deal with the medium-range forces in Europe, as both sides now more or less agree. It could begin with a two-year agreement requiring Moscow to dismantle its older SS-4's and SS-5's, while Washington began deployments only of ground-launched cruise missiles. The Soviet Union did not hesitate to upgrade its capabilities substantially with the deployment of more than 450 SS-20's, and it is absolutely unreasonable for Moscow to reject some modernization of American missiles in Europe. The future integrity of NATO depends on some deployments, and Moscow knows this.

Moscow would also be required to freeze its SS-20 total at its present level in both the European and Asian portions of the Soviet Union. In return, Washington would temporarily forgo the right to deploy the Pershing 2 ballistic missiles, which, unlike the relatively slow cruise missiles, could reach Soviet territory from European bases in about 12 minutes, and which, therefore, are of particular concern to the Soviet leaders. And each side would be limited to 300 medium-range bombers.

In stage two, the talks on medium-range weapons would merge with negotiations on intercontinental-range missiles and bombers, and the two sides would agree to reduce their overall store of warheads and bombs — about 11,000 apiece — by about 25 percent. Each side would be free to decide where to put its permitted total. Thus, if the United States wanted more medium-range missiles in Europe, it would have to cut the number of its intercontinental weapons.

But we cannot expect the Russians to reduce their SS-20's so long as there is no formula for taking British and French nuclear forces into account. Such a formula might involve abandoning the deployment of Pershing 2's altogether. At the same time, there would have to be some accommodation of the Soviet view that Chinese and American nuclear forces in Asia must be taken into account, an objective that might require separate tripartite talks with China. By the same token, Moscow cannot expect us to count in our totals third-country forces we do not control.

This stage would be a good time for several confidence-building measures — no testing of submarine-launched missiles that, unlike ballistic missiles, stay within the atmosphere and thus can reach their targets more quickly in a first strike; no antisubmarine warfare exercises in certain regions, thus helping maintain the invulnerability of submarines; no testing of new missiles with multiple warheads, to prevent further improvements in accuracy.

Initial steps could be taken to reduce the number of giant land-based missiles. Since this is the Russians' strongest suit by far, they will part with it only reluctantly and slowly. The Administration has a choice of retaining the MX and allowing the Russians to keep their heavy missiles, or cashing in the MX for reductions in Soviet heavies.

The most difficult problems would be left for stage three. The superpowers would seek agreement on a restructuring of their forces, retreating from the mutual threat of multiple warheads and leaving single-warhead missiles as the centerpiece for both. They would try to impose controls on ground- and sea-launched cruise missiles. They would move toward a prohibition on development and testing of all new missiles.

Not before this last stage could one contemplate saving money or improving the overall political relationship between the superpowers. Until then, and even afterward, the main purpose would be to manage the competition in nuclear weapons. But, step by step, this kind of arms control would mean a progressive reduction of the risks of nuclear war.

This approach is not without its own serious obstacles. We would have to learn to live for at least the next decade with Soviet advantages in land-based missiles, and to be satisfied with our superiority in submarine and bomber forces. After that, the expectation is that the two sides would develop more comparable arsenals across the board; but that is not easy to insure. The approach would also necessitate greater patience with arms control, and an American political leadership courageous enough to stand up to extremist demands.

But the alternative — inflated proposals with minimal chances of success that play into the hands of those who want to prove that "arms control does not work" — is likely to lead to an open-ended arms race. If that happens, if international restraints, such as they are, are allowed to erode, can we count on holding war at bay very much longer? Because deterrence has worked until now, can we be sure it will work in the future? While it stretches rationality to imagine a conscious decision to begin a nuclear conflict, we have every reason not to trust ourselves, let alone others.

Arms control is not the answer to the perilous competition between the United States and the Soviet Union and the security problems posed for both. But without it, there are no answers. ■

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR 6 Jun Pg. 2

Kohl reportedly won't pay for US troop relocation

Bonn

The newsmagazine Der Spiegel said that West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl rejected a US request during the Williamsburg summit on troop redeployment costs.

Quoting informed sources, Der Spiegel said Chancellor Kohl firmly turned down President Reagan's request for West Germany to take over all the costs of restationing US troops to new bases close to the East-West German border.

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW
MAY/JUNE 1983 (24 JULY)
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The Ultimate Trust: National Self-Restraint as a Factor in War

by

Colonel Theodore L. Gatchel, US Marine Corps

I

An anti-nuclear movement appears to be taking America by storm. In a short time, the movement progressed from resolutions at New England town meetings and demonstrations at the launchings of nuclear submarines to the point where it is influencing national policy makers, if not national policy. Over a year ago seventeen US senators and more than one hundred members of the House of Representatives called upon the Reagan administration to negotiate a nuclear freeze with the Soviet Union, for example, and about the same time four nationally known policy makers from previous administrations published an article recommending that the United States declare a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons in Europe.[1] Even Admiral Rickover, father of the nuclear submarine, and Dr. Samuel Cohen, Rickover's counterpart with respect to the neutron bomb, have recently expressed second thoughts regarding the wisdom of employing the weapons they worked so hard to create.[2]

The nature of this anti-nuclear movement is so diverse that it defies accurate definition. The individuals involved include pacifists and others who oppose nuclear weapons on moral grounds; radicals searching for a chance to discomfit the United States; and serious strategic thinkers who believe that reliance on nuclear deterrence, the effectiveness of which is uncertain at best, is a shaky foundation on which to rest our nation's security. In spite of the great diversity of motivation, several common themes seem to unite these individuals, at least loosely. One is the belief that nuclear war is both imminent and unsurvivable. The hands of the ominous Doomsday Clock of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, for example, are closer to the hour of doom than they have been since the Cuban missile crisis. The issue of survivability has also been discussed in a wide variety of recent articles and books, many of which depict any employment of nuclear weapons as leading inexorably to the complete destruction of the human race. Another characteristic found among many anti-nuclear activists is the reluctance to accept the idea that someone could be against nuclear war and yet not support the current proposals for disarmament or a nuclear freeze. In the view of these activists, those who do not agree with them are misguided at best, and, at worst, deliberate contributors to the impending destruction of mankind.

An even more disturbing aspect of the anti-nuclear movement is the tendency of many writers and speakers on the subject to treat the issue of nuclear war as if it were a one-sided problem. Many articles, for example, fail even to mention the Soviet Union. Those that do often treat this "other half of the equation" in one of two ways. The first might be described as an even-handed approach. In this view the US and Soviet leaders are equally to blame for the current situation, and the US and Soviet people are equally ready to put an end to the threat of nuclear war forever. Dr. Helen Caldicott, President of the Physicians for Social Responsibility, used this approach during an appearance on the "Phil Donahue Show." She described the efforts of Soviet doctors to warn the Soviet people of the dangers of nuclear war as being similar to those of her organization in the United States. She did not explain, however, what means the Soviet people would use to influence their leaders in the Kremlin.

A second approach is to acknowledge the Soviets as a threat, but ignore them in attacking the problem. Proponents of this view believe that the United States must take the lead in reducing nuclear armaments regardless of whether the Soviets respond in a similar manner. Randall Kehler, national coordinator of the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, uses a mild form of this approach when he states that "While there is no guarantee that the Soviets would automatically agree to a comprehensive freeze, our first objective, as American citizens, must be to persuade our own government to initiate such a proposal, taking full advantage of the democratic processes which we in this country are fortunate to have."[3] Francis X. Winters, S.J., associate professor of moral theology at Georgetown University, takes a harder line when discussing the obligation of Roman Catholics with respect to threatening the use of nuclear war in order to deter aggression: "We must deny ourselves the resort to such a threat, or use, of force whether or not our adversary reciprocates this act of self-denial. Even against an adversary claiming this right, we must not lay claim to it."[4] Many supporters of this view seem to enjoy a certain moral satisfaction of doing the "right" thing regardless of what the consequences might be. In a recent poll of 500 randomly selected Connecticut residents, for example, three out of four stated that they supported a nuclear freeze even though they overwhelmingly believed that the Soviets could not be trusted to carry out their end of any agreement, even with a system of inspection.[5]

In the final analysis, any such one-sided approach to disarmament must rely very heavily on trust in our potential enemies. On one level, we would be trusting the Soviets to carry out a reduction of nuclear arms similar to one we

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blows will be directed at civilians, that element of the countries at war least able to sustain them. These future wars may yet prove to be more humane than wars in the past in spite of all, because they may in the long run shed less blood."[10] This reasoning was to appear again in World War II.

Although most proponents of air warfare agreed on the necessity for an independent air force, there was much less agreement about the need for bombing civilians. The reservations ranged from ethical ones to practical ones involving the vulnerability of virtually all of the major cities of Europe during the period between the World Wars. Great Britain felt particularly threatened, and her leaders took the initiative in attempting to restrict the use of bombing in war. Their efforts ranged from disarmament proposals to attempts to amend the rules of war. Without exception, these attempts were unsuccessful. Conflicting national interests proved impossible to resolve. Proposals that satisfied one nation appeared to threaten another. Ultimately, however, the various attempts came to grief over the lack of agreement as to exactly what constituted a legitimate target for aerial bombing. Some targets beyond the battle area were clearly of a military nature. An ammunition factory, for example, would clearly be such a target. Even before the start of World War II, however, the distinction between most civilian and military targets had become too blurred to be incorporated adequately into international law.

Lack of agreement over the legitimacy of aerial bombing notwithstanding, most of Europe's major powers repudiated the idea of bombing civilians. In 1938, for example, Neville Chamberlain declared in the House of Commons that Britain would bomb only military targets.[11] On several occasions, Adolf Hitler stated that Germany also would limit bombing to military targets.[12] Based on the Condor Legion's performance in Spain, Hitler's sincerity can be challenged. In any case he felt compelled to declare himself for what might be called the conventional morality on the subject. President Roosevelt's appeal to all the belligerents on the day Germany invaded Poland represents perhaps the epitome of this traditional view. In his message, Roosevelt mentioned the air raids of the previous few years that had "profoundly shocked the conscience of humanity" and then appealed " . . . to each government, which may be engaged in hostilities, publicly to affirm its determination that its armed forces shall in no event and under no circumstances undertake bombing from the air of civilian populations or unfortified cities, upon the understanding that the same rules of warfare will be scrupulously observed by all their opponents."[13] Each of the warring nations responded affirmatively.

Between the invasion of Poland and the Battle of Britain, both sides generally honored President Roosevelt's appeal. There were, of course, exceptions. Even Warsaw and Rotterdam, the two most obvious exceptions, can be seen as something less than the all-out, indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets. As the Germans correctly point out, both cities were defended and being fought over at the time of their bombing. Additionally, both cities were warned of the bombings and given the chance to capitulate. During these early days of the war, the British limited their efforts to dropping leaflets and attacking well-defined military targets where the danger of causing civilian casualties was almost nil. This restraint was not so much the product of ethical concerns, however, as it was of fear of retaliation in kind. Once the *Luftwaffe* gained possession of airfields in France, the British began to fear for the safety of their cities. They did not have to wait long for their fears to prove justified.

The bombing of British cities during the Battle of Britain in 1940 marked a major step upward on the ladder of bombing escalation that ended only with the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. As so often happens in war, however, this step was not planned, but resulted from what Clausewitz would have called friction. The battle began as an effort to destroy the RAF, a prerequisite for any cross-channel invasion of the British Isles. Lack of careful planning by the Germans resulted in their attacks being shifted from one type of target to another without attaining any decisive effect. During one such attack on the London docks, a section of bombers inadvertently released their bombs over central London. This accident infuriated Hitler, who had specifically withheld for himself the authority to order what he referred to as terror attacks.[14] Churchill, bowing to public pressure for revenge, ordered the RAF to bomb Berlin in retaliation. The resulting raid was insignificant militarily, but it touched a sensitive nerve nevertheless. It both surprised the Germans, who had underestimated the ability of the RAF to attack Germany, and provoked Hitler into removing his previous restrictions on bombing British cities. The Germans quit short of their goal, but not before thousands of British civilians had experienced the horrors of aerial bombing firsthand.

Although the German aerial blitz against British cities failed to destroy either the will or the ability of the British to continue fighting, the RAF initiated a campaign based on the premise that bombing could accomplish against the Germans what it had failed to achieve against the British. Advocates of this campaign explained away the apparent contradiction in two ways. The first explanation was that the British were simply tougher than the Germans, less likely to break under the stress of bombing. The second was that the Germans had failed to pursue their bombing relentlessly enough to achieve decisive results. This latter conclusion, with its implication of German success had their bombing continued, drove RAF leaders to resist efforts to divert Allied bombing away from "strategic" targets later in the war.

As the RAF geared up for a bomber offensive against Germany, British leaders were forced to face the fact that they had neither the aircraft nor the tactics needed to implement their bombing doctrine. The aircraft problem was quickly being solved. Freed from the immediate need of producing the

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however, so the issue was never brought to a head. On another occasion, Admiral William D. Leahy and General Arnold protested the use of area bombing in a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.[21] Even Winston Churchill came to question the value of the attacks, which he referred to as "mere acts of terror and wanton destruction."[22] His concerns were not so much a matter of ethics, however, as a fear that the Allies would soon inherit a Germany that could no longer support itself. When confronted with such reservations, Air Marshal Arthur Harris, the head of Bomber Command, responded with a justification strikingly similar to General Douhet's:

"In spite of all that happened at Hamburg, bombing proved a comparatively humane method. For one thing, it saved the flower of the youth of this country and of our allies from being mown down by the military in the field, as it was in Flanders in the war of 1914-1918."[23]

Reasoning of this type was surely what caused one RAF chaplain to state that a lecture that Harris had directed be presented to his senior officers titled "The Ethics of Bombing" would have more aptly been called "The Bombing of Ethics."[24] Throughout the European war, the USAAF had steadfastly maintained its position with respect to the moral and practical superiority of precision daylight bombing. The American view was about to change.

Freed by Germany's surrender to concentrate on the war against Japan, USAAF planners soon discovered that the new set of circumstances required the rethinking of some previously accepted ideas. On one hand, Japan represented a bombing planner's dream. Isolated geographically, the islands were a manageable target for attack from the air. If bombing could force Japan out of the war without an invasion, the future of a US Air Force would be assured in the same way that raising the flag on Mount Suribachi soon would ensure "a Marine Corps for the next 500 years."[25]

Facing planners on the other hand were some severe problems. The new B-29s were encountering engine problems operating at the altitudes for which they were designed. Another problem involved the nature of Japanese industry. Japan's factories, unlike Germany's, were not located in well-defined industrial complexes. Instead they were spread piecemeal throughout large urban areas. At this same time, Japanese resistance was continuing to stiffen, causing American planners to estimate as many as one million casualties if an invasion of Japan proper were to be undertaken.

In response to these varied considerations, General Curtis LeMay, who had been brought in from Europe to lead the bombing effort against Japan, made a bold tactical decision. Removing most of the defensive armament from his B-29s, LeMay sent them against Japan in the same manner that the RAF had attacked the cities of Germany; at night, at low level, with huge loads of incendiary bombs. The wood and paper construction used in many Japanese buildings made fire bombing even more destructive in Japan than it had been in Germany. The raid on Tokyo on 9 March 1945, for example, caused an estimated 185,000 casualties, making it the most destructive air raid of all time.[26] If the tactics used by the Americans turned out to be the same as the RAF's, so did the justification. General LeMay explains his own thinking with his customary bluntness, " . . . No matter how you slice it, you're going to kill an awful lot of civilians. Thousands and thousands. But, if you don't destroy the Japanese industry, we're going to have to invade Japan. And how many Americans will be killed in an invasion of Japan? Five hundred thousand seems to be the lowest estimate. Some say a million."[27]

Without either condemning or accepting the decisions made by Allied leaders under the harsh conditions of World War II, one can make some observations about the effectiveness of moral restraint in war. The British and Americans both went to war having repudiated the use of bombing against civilian targets. Both countries reached a point, however, at which the policy of self-restraint was discarded. The reasons for this reversal were complex and included both the public pressure for revenge and a genuine belief that such bombing could end the war rapidly with a correspondingly lower loss of life. Of all the justifications commonly used, national survival is perhaps the least honest. From late 1943 on, the period in which the United States and Britain conducted their most devastating bombing, neither nation can be said to have had its back to the wall. Much hard fighting remained, but an eventual Allied victory could be seen by all. With certain exceptions such as US Secretary of War Stimson's removing the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto from US target lists, moral restraint took a back seat to operational requirements during the bombing campaigns of World War II. As so often happens with the study of history, however, honest and reasonable observers can draw different conclusions from the same events. Proponents of disarmament would probably claim that the area bombing of World War II demonstrates not so much the ineffectiveness of moral restraint as it does the fact that simply possessing a particular weapon ultimately ensures its use.

III

With peace as the goal of both parties, the critical difference between disarmament and deterrence lies in who controls the events that might lead to war. As long as the United States can pose a serious threat to its potential enemies, Americans will have at least some control over their national security. A unilaterally disarmed America, on the other hand, must rely on the self-restraint of those same potential enemies.

Unfortunately a look at the Soviets and their ideas about war gives little reason to expect such restraint. Soviet military doctrine treats the application of force in a systematic way relying on "scientific" means to determine how much force is required to achieve a particular goal. They may, in any given case, prefer to use non-military means to gain the desired results. If force becomes necessary, however, the Soviets have shown little reluctance to use

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